

Minutes
Region 2 Regional Services Council
November 2, 2005

Introductions:

The meeting convened at 5:30 PM CST by the Chairperson, Charlotte Richey at the Starke County Department of Child Services.

In attendance: Judge Mary Harper, Magistrate Ed Nemeth, Jon Rutkowski, Terry Ciboch, Judge Michael Shurn, Laurel Myers, Char Richey, Judge Jeryl Leach, Judge Kim Hall, Larry Harris, and Sharon Mathew.
(Sign-in and attendance sheets are attached.)

Introductions were made. Char provided to the attendees a binder, "Regional Services Council- Region 2" containing information regarding the statewide charge of the RSC as well as region specific data.

Char stated the purpose of the meeting was organizational and to develop the region's approach, protocol and plan for the RSC.

Charge of the Council:

Char reviewed the letters from Director Payne dated April 2005 and September 27, 2005 outlining the vision, organization and responsibilities of the council. The primary charge of the council is to identify a service array appropriate to needs in the region and to then ensure uniform and consistent services.

Membership of the Council:

Voting Members as of 11/02/05:

Regional Manager: Charlotte Richey

Judges

Judge Michael Shurn (Pulaski Co)

Judge Mary Harper (Porter Co)

Judge Jeryl Leach (Newton Co)

Directors

Larry Harris (Starke Co)

Terry Ciboch (LaPorte Co)

Sharon Mathew (Jasper Co)

Remaining RSC Membership:

Char notified those in attendance that the following individuals were being considered for the remaining membership. They had either been nominated or volunteered.

- CASA Director: Claudia Clark (Porter Co)
- Family Case Manager Supervisor: Linda Gray (Jasper & Newton Cos)
- Family Case Manager: Eileen Walters (LaPorte Co)

There were no objection among the attendees to these candidates. Char agreed to contact each and if appointed would be attending the next meeting.

The remaining voting member to the Council is the Foster Parent selection. Char stated ideally the person would come from Starke or Pulaski Counties. This would provide

membership from all areas of the region. The Directors from the aforementioned counties felt that there was not a viable candidate due to the low number of county licensed foster parents in their counties and the travel and time commitment required. The attendees agreed that LaPorte and Porter would provide candidate names to Char for selection.

Terry Ciboch raised the following issue: If an RSC member sits on a Board for a service provider, would that RSC member (if a voting member) need to abstain from voting on any issues involving that services provider? Would a voting or non-voting member need to abstain from any discussions regarding that service provider?

Meeting Conduct:

There was discussion to establish a standing date and time for the meetings. Judge Harper suggested that we set the next meeting and investigate further a “central” location. It was agreed that the Region 2 RSC will meet the first Wednesday evening of each month. The hosting county will be responsible for the minutes of the meeting.

It was also agreed that all six Region 2 Juvenile Judges and County Directors will be welcomed to attend any RSC meeting and will be copied in all email/correspondences related to the Council.

The following issues were raised regarding future meetings and their format:

The question was raised by Judge Harper as to whether or not voting members can use proxies to attend these meetings. Char indicated that she would check into that possibility. Judge Leach made the point that, to be effective, proxies would have to be as well-informed as possible regarding issues discussed at prior meetings.

Judge Mary Harper made the suggestion that the meetings could be conducted by first working through the agenda and then allowing for fifteen minutes of comment by members of the public in attendance.

Terry Ciboch raised the question as to whether or not the RSC meetings are subject to "Open Door" laws and requirements. Char indicated that DCS Attorney John Ryan was researching this subject. Judge Harper stated that the meetings could be held on a set night each month, at a site such as a courtroom in which the public could be present, but physically separate from the RSC members. Judge Leach indicated that a legal opinion should be sought from Director Payne and that, if these meetings are subject to Open Door laws, legal notice will have to be provided, and then the question is, How to provide notice in all the affected counties? E.g., provide notice in the paper in each county? Do an annual publishing of meetings to be advertised?

Review of Binder Contents:

Resources:

Note was made of the listings of *Existing* Community/Neighborhood Resources and *Proposed* Community/Neighborhood Resources.

Statistics:

This sections provides information regarding budgets and staffing for the 18 Regions, as well as ICWIS reports providing on a county-by-county basis statistics regarding placements, IAs, CHINS, CHINS-JD/JS statistics and number of CHINS per thousand of county population.

Model Projects:

Includes information of model projects from within Indiana and in the nation. These resources will need to be reviewed when the Council beings to develop the outline for our Community Partners for Child Safety Program.

Financial:

Includes information on changes to the upcoming 2006-2008 IV-B plan and information regarding county budgets (2006 CWS, Family and Children and CPRTS account) for Region 2.

RSC and the IV-B Process

Terry Ciboch suggested that a copy of the 2006-2008 Child Welfare Services Plan should be provided to all of the Judges in Region 2 and that the IV-B process and service standards could be treated as a “starting point” for the RSC process of developing and selecting services. Char indicated that she would forward electronically.

The point was made that the RSC would not be reviewing the IV-B proposal, but would be reviewing the choice made by the Local Offices in this process.

Terry Ciboch added that Judge Gilmore wanted him to put on the record that it is important to him to keep their local providers and the regional service approach could be used to negotiate a lower regional rate for services.

Future Meetings:

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 12/07/05 at 6:00 PM CST/7:00 PM EST. The location will be in Valparaiso in the Porter County Courthouse (Judge Harper’s Court). Judge Harper indicated that the front door of the courthouse will be open 5:45 to 6:30PM CST on that date.

The 12/07 meeting will include the full Council membership and topics of discussion will include the Service Standards outline in the IV-B RFP and an identification of service gaps in our region.

The January 4, 2006 meeting will take place in Rensselaer.

This meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:00 PM CST, 11/02/05.

Minutes submitted on 11/14/05 by Jon Rutkowski, Director Porter County DCS.